



Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction

Jonathan Potter

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'This is an admirable book which can be recommended to students with confidence, and is likely also to become an indispensable source of reference for those researching fact construction' - *Discourse & Society*

How is reality manufactured? The idea of social construction has become a commonplace of much social research, yet precisely *what* is constructed, and *how*, and even what constructionism *means*, is often unclear or taken for granted. In this major work, Jonathan Potter offers a fascinating tour of the central themes raised by these questions.

Representing Reality overviews the different traditions in constructionist thought. Points are illustrated throughout with varied and engaging examples taken from newspaper stories, relationship counselling sessions, accounts of the paranormal, social workers' assessments of violent parents, informal talk between programme makers, political arguments and everyday conversations. Ranging across the social and human sciences, this book provides a lucid introduction to several key strands of work that have overturned the way we think about facts and descriptions, including: the sociology of scientific knowledge; conversation analysis and ethnomethodology; and semiotics, post-structuralism and postmodernism.

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